UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/25301
17 February 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 16 FEBRUARY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Government of Croatia was very pleased with your letter dated 9 February 1993 (S/25274), and with the enclosed report of a preliminary site exploration of a mass grave near Vukovar. We hail the devoted and profound work of the Commission of Experts with a view to collecting and inspecting all the evidence of grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions and other violations of humanitarian law committed on the territory of Croatia, as well as on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere in the Balkans. It is our firm opinion that establishment of an International Criminal Tribunal to pass judgement upon all war criminals, and to judge all war crimes committed during the Serbian aggression against Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, is an essential precondition for ending the crisis in the area and implanting the post-war confidence-building measures. Therefore, the Croatian Government will continue to give all its support to the work of the Commission of Experts and is looking forward to cooperating fully with United Nations efforts in precise implementation of Security Council resolutions 771 (1992) and 780 (1992).

Unfortunately, in welcoming the work of the Commission of Experts, Croatia must emphasize strong discontent with the fact that, in the report of a preliminary site exploration (S/25274, annex II), the town of Vukovar and surrounding area are considered to be in the "former Yugoslavia". Vukovar is, and can only be on the territory of the Republic of Croatia, a sovereign State Member of the United Nations.

The mass graves around Vukovar are filled with remains of Croatian soldiers and innocent civilians who boldly died for their country, the Republic of Croatia. For the sake of their memory, and everything they valiantly stood for, Croatia cannot allow that the soil they rest in be called "former Yugoslavia".

I would be grateful if you could provide for the distribution of this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Permanent Representative

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